

*Suzanne
Murphy*

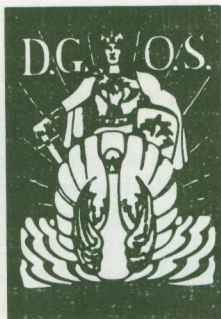
Champagne Gala Night

*This is a new innovation
for the
DUBLIN GRAND OPERA SOCIETY
and takes place in the
Gaiety Theatre
on
Tuesday 10th December, 1985.*

*A Champagne Reception
will be held at 6.15 p.m.
which will be followed by the opera
"Eugene Onegin"
at 7.30 p.m.*

Tickets including Reception £20

Black Tie



THE DUBLIN GRAND OPERA SOCIETY

Presents

SUZANNE MURPHY

Soprano

in

The William O'Kelly Memorial Recital

with

INGRID SURGENOR

Accompanist

at

The National Concert Hall

on

Friday, 15th November, 1985

at 8 p.m.



Suzanne Murphy

Limerick-born Suzanne Murphy needs no introduction to Irish audiences. She began her studies with Veronica Dunne at the College of Music, Dublin in 1973 and made her debut with the Irish National Opera in January 1974 singing the title role in Rossini's *La Cenerentola*.

She joined Welsh National Opera in 1976 as principal soprano and her first role with the company was Constanza in Mozart's *Il Seraglio*. Her interpretation of Verdi roles has been highly praised and she has sung Amalia (*I Masnadieri*); Elisabeth (*Don Carlos*);

Leonora (*Il Trovatore*); Gilda (*Rigoletto*); Elvira (*Ernani*) and Violetta (*La Traviata*). It was in the latter role that she had a spectacular success when she sang it with the Dublin Grand Opera Society at the Gaiety in the Winter Season of 1983.

During 1984 Suzanne's roles included Constanza for the English National Opera; Elvira (*I Puritani*) and Amelia (*Ballo in Maschera*); Hanna Glawari (*The Merry Widow*) and Musetta (*La Bohème*) for Welsh National Opera.

Earlier this year Suzanne had a major success in Vancouver where she sang Amelia and Elvira and the title role in Bellini's *Norma* with Welsh National Opera, the role she sang only last week in the City Opera, New York. Prior to her United States visit she toured with Opera North in the U.K. singing Elvira in all the major cities.

Future plans include the title role in *Lucia di Lammermoor* with Opera North, Fiordiligi (*Così fan tutte*) in Pittsburg; Reiza in *Oberon* for the Opera de Lyon and R. Strauss's *Elektra* at the Vienna Staatsoper.

Suzanne has an active concert career and apart from regular concerts throughout Britain, her overseas engagements in recent seasons have included concerts in Sweden, Denmark and Austria.



Ingrid Surgenor

Ingrid Surgenor's career began at the Royal Academy of Music where she immediately specialised in piano accompaniment. Her work was greatly influenced by further study with Paul Hamburger and in master class with the famous accompanist Gerald Moore.

She was a member of the Music Staff at Glyndebourne Festival Opera for three years and for seven years was official accompanist for the prestigious Kathleen Ferrier Memorial Scholarships.

In 1983 and 1985 she was official accompanist for the final of the Cardiff Singer of the World Competition which was televised on BBC.

Recital Programme

THREE ARIE ANTICHE

Il faut, hélas

Spontini

Il est parti

Blangini

Plaisir d'amour

Martini

TWO SONGS

The Mermaids Song

Haydn

Pastoral

FOUR FRENCH SONGS

Le Colibri

Chausson

Les Papillons

C

Poulenc

Fêtes Galantes

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Zueignung

Strauss

Das Rosenband

Muttertändelei

Cäcilie

RECITATIVE AND ARIA

Ecco l'orrido campo

Verdi

Programme Notes

THREE ARIE ANTICHE

Il faut, hélas

Il est parti

Plaisir d'amour

Gasparo Spontini (1774-1851)

Felice Blangini (1781-1841)

Giovanni Paolo Martini (1741-1816)

Although he was born near Ancona and studied in Naples, Spontini spent the larger part of his life in Paris and Berlin pursuing a career as a composer of opera and conductor. However, his quick temper and pompous manner made him hard to work with and contributed to his dismissal from both the Théâtre-Italien in Paris and the Berlin Court Opera. His works show the transition from Gluck's classicism to the later heroic-historical opera and none more so than in this most famous opera *La Vestale* which conquered Paris in 1807. His vocal works are characterised by long gravely sculptured melodies with their sense of line and dignity of style and the formal and somewhat stilted pathos that is their quaint and special mark.

Blangini was a French Composer, singing teacher and tenor of Italian birth. He composed some 30 operas, church music, romances and has been credited with the invention of the vocal nocturne of which he wrote more than 170. With his elegant and fluent melodic style he succeeded in uniting the French taste for correct and appropriate presentation of the text with the Italian taste for singing it beautifully.

Martini's real name was Johann Paul Schwartzendorf and he was known as 'Martini the German' to distinguish him from his more illustrious Italian namesake — Padre Martini (The latter's pupils included J. C. Bach, Grétry and Mozart). He wrote operas, church music and songs of which the best known is *Plaisir d'amour*.

Il faut, hélas

Il faut, hélas! bien peu de chose,
pour charmer un sensible coeur,
un geste un mot un mot flatteur
il n'exige que ce qu'il ose
ce sont ces riens ces riens charmants
qui sont tout pour les amants.

Est-on seul? on aime à se dire
(souvenirs d'amour sont si doux)
là je le vis à mes genoux
ici je l'ai vu me sourire.
Ce sont ces riens ces riens charmants
qui sont tout pour les amants.

Alas! it takes very little
to charm a sensitive heart,
a gesture, a word, a flattering word
it demands only what it dares
it is those nothings those charming nothings
which are everything for the lovers.

One is alone! one loves to remind oneself
(souvenirs of love are so sweet)
there I saw him at my knees
here I see him smile at me.
It is those nothings those charming nothings
which are everything for the lovers.

Il est parti!

Il est parti! mon âme se déchire,
il a trahi ses plus tendres serments.
Je cherche en vain, j'appelle, je soupire
et l'écho seul répond à mes accents.
Il est parti! Victime abandonnée
dans un désert, va cacher tes douleurs.
Il est parti! Gémis, infortunée;
qui désormais pourra tarir mes pleurs?

He is gone, my soul is tormented,
he has betrayed his most tender vows.
I search in vain, I call, I sigh
and only the echo answers to my pleas.
He is gone! abandoned victim
in a desert, go hide your misery.
He is gone! bemoan misfortunate one;
who henceforth will be able to arrest my tears?

Plaisir d'amour

Plaisir d'amour ne dure qu'un moment:
chagrin d'amour dure toute la vie.

Plaisir d'amour *etc.*

J'ai tout quitté pour l'ingrate Sylvie;
elle me quitté et prend un autre amant.
"Tant que cette eau coulera doucement
vers ce ruisseau qui borde le prairie
je t'aimerai" me répétait Sylvie.
L'eau coule encore, elle a changé pourtant.
Plaisir d'amour *etc.*

The joys of love are shortlived but the pain is
everlasting. I sacrificed everything for cruel
Sylvia, who took another lover. She promised to
love me for ever, but she changed.

TWO SONGS

The Mermaid's Song — Anne Hunter
Pastoral — Anne Hunter

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

Having spent some 30 years as composer-in-residence to the Esterházy family, in their Palace beside Neusiedlersee, Haydn's idyllic life here ended in 1790 when Prince Nikolaus died and his successor dismissed all the court musicians. He accepted an invitation from the impresario Johann Salomon to visit London where he was fêted and lionized. A second visit followed in 1794 during which, apart from the second series of London Symphonies, he wrote a set of 12 Canzonettas to English words of which *The Mermaid's Song* and *Pastoral* are Nos. 1 and 3 respectively.

The Mermaids Song

Now the dancing sunbeams play on the green and glassy sea;
Come and I will lead the way where, the pearly treasures be.
Come with me and we will go, where the rocks of coral grow.
Follow, follow, follow me.

Come behold what treasures lie far below the rolling waves;
Riches hid from human eye dimly shine in Oceans caves.
Ebbing tides bear no delay, stormy winds are far away.
Come with me and we will go, where the rocks of coral grow.
Follow, follow, follow me.

A Pastoral Song

My mother bids me bind my hair with bands of rosy hue,
Tie up my sleeves with ribbands rare and lace my bodice blue.
For why, she cries, sit still and weep, while others dance and play?
Alas, I scarce can go or creep, while Lubin is away.

'Tis sad to think the days are gone when those we love were near,
I sit upon this mossy stone and sigh when none can hear.
And while I spin my flaxen thread and sing my simple lay
The village seems asleep or dead; now Lubin is away.

FOUR FRENCH SONGS

Le Colibri — Leconte de Lisle
Les Papillons — Théophile Gautier
C — Louis Aragon
Fêtes Galantes — Louis Aragon

Ernest Chausson (1855-1899)

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

Son of a wealthy Parisian building contractor Chausson studied law before taking up music and becoming a pupil of César Franck. Never needing to earn his living he worked slowly and carefully at composition. He wrote 3 operas of which only *Le Roi Arthur* (1903) has been performed. *Poème for Violin and Orchestra* Op. 25, his most famous work, was written in 1896. *Le Colibri* and *Les Papillons* are Nos. 7 and 3 respectively from an album of *7 Mélodies* Op. 2 published in 1882.

Francis Poulenc wrote operas, a ballet, symphonic music and so on, quite prolifically, but centrally he went on composing songs, setting fine poetry, much of it modern, sometimes with a sense of frivolousness, sometimes with evident intensity of emotion — and often with a mixture of the two. It has been well remarked that his tongue was never more firmly in his cheek than when he was most deadly in earnest. These *DEUX POÈMES D'ARAGON* were written and published in December 1943.

Le Colibri

Le vert colibri, le roi des collines,
Voyant la rosée et le soleil clair
Luire dans son nid tissé d'herbes fines,
Comme un frais rayon s'échappe dans l'air.

Il se hâte et vole aux sources voisines,
Où les bambous font le bruit de la mer,
Où l'açoka rouge aux odeurs divines
S'ouvre et porte au coeur un humide éclair.

Vers la fleur dorée il descend, se pose,
Et boit tant d'amour dans la coupe rose,
Qu'il meurt ne sachant s'il l'a pu tarir!

Sur ta lèvre pure, ô ma bien-aimée,
Telle aussi mon âme eut voulu mourir,
Du premier baiser qui l'a parfumée.

Les Papillons

Les papillons couleur de neige
Volent par essaims sur la mer:
Beaux papillons blancs,
Quand pourrai-je prendre
Le bleu chemin de l'air.

Savez vous, O belle des belles,
Ma bayadère aux yeux de jais,
S'ils me voulaient prêter leurs ailes,
Dites, savez-vous, ou j'irais?

Sans prendre un seul baiser aux roses,
À travers vallons et forêts,
J'irais à vos lèvres micloses,
Fleur de mon âme, et j'y mourrais.

The Humming-Bird

The green humming-bird, the king of the hills,
seeing the dew and the bright sun
shining into his nest, woven of fine grasses,
darts into the air like a ray of light.

He hurries and flies to the nearby springs,
where bamboos make a sound like the sea,
where the red hibiscus with its divine fragrance
unfolds the dewy brilliance at its heart.

He descends to the golden flower, alights,
and drinks so much love from the rosy cup,
that he dies, not knowing if he had exhausted
its nectar!

On your pure lips, O my beloved,
likewise my soul wished to die,
of the first kiss which perfumed it.

The Butterflies

The snow-coloured butterflies fly in swarms
over the sea; Beautiful white butterflies, when can
I take the blue path of the air?

Do you know, O fairest of the fair, my dancing
girl with the jet black eyes, if they would lend me
their wings, tell me, do you know where I would
go?

Without taking a single kiss from the roses,
across valleys and forests, I would go to your
half-closed lips, flower of my soul and there I
would die.

C
 J'ai traversé les ponts de Cé,
 C'est là que tout a commencé
 Une chanson des temps passés
 Parle d'un chevalier blessé.
 D'une rose sur la chaussée
 Et d'un corsage délacé
 Du château d'un duc insensé,
 Et des cygnes dans les fossés.
 De la prairie où vient danser
 Une éternelle fiancée
 Et j'ai bu comme un lait, glacé
 Le long lai des gloires faussées.
 La Loire emporte mes pensées
 Avec les voitures versées
 Et les armes désamorçées
 Et les larmes mal effacées
 O ma France, ô ma délaissée
 J'ai traversé les ponts de Cé.

Fêtes Galantes

On voit des marquis sur des bicyclettes
 On voit des marlous en cheval jupon
 On voit des morveux avec des voilettes
 On voit des pompiers brûler les pompons
 On voit des mots jetés à la voirie
 On voit des mots élevés au pavois
 On voit les pieds des enfants de Marie
 On voit le dos des diseuses à voix
 On voit des voitur' à gazogène
 On voit aussi des voitur' à bras
 On voit des lascars que les longs nez gênent
 On voit des coions de dix huit carats
 On voit ici ce que l'on voit ailleurs
 On voit des demoiselles dévoyées
 On voit des voyous, On voit des voyeurs
 On voit sous les ponts passer les noyés
 On voit chômer les marchands de chaussures
 On voit mourir d'ennui les mireurs d'oeufs
 On voit péricliter les valeurs sûres
 Et fuir la vie à la six quat' deux.

C
 I have crossed the bridges of Cé
 it is there that it all began
 a song of bygone days
 tells of a wounded knight.

Of a rose on the carriage-way
 and an unlaced bodice
 of the castle of a mad duke
 and swans on the moats.

Of the meadow where comes dancing
 an eternal betrothed
 and I drank like iced milk
 the long lay of false glories.

The Loire carried my thoughts away
 with the overturned cars
 and the unprimed weapons
 and the ill-dried tears.

O my France O my forsaken France
 I have crossed the bridges of Cé.

You see fops on bicycles
 You see pimps in kilts
 You see brats with veils
 You see firemen burning their pompons
 You see words thrown on the rubbish heap
 You see words extolled to the skies
 You see the feet of Mary's children
 You see the backs of cabaret singers
 You see motor cars run on gazogene
 You see also handcars
 You see wily fellows whose long noses hinder them
 You see fools of the first water
 You see what you see elsewhere
 You see young girls who are led astray
 You see guttersnipes you see perverts
 You see drowned folk floating under the bridges
 You see out of work shoemakers
 You see egg chandlers bored to death
 You see true values in jeopardy
 and life whirring by in a slap-dash way.

ARIA

Quando me'n vo — La Bohème

Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924)

La Bohème has long been a victim of its own popularity. Even among Puccini operas it is recognisably the easiest of all to assimilate. This story of the life and loves of Bohemian students in Paris made Puccini's fortune and contains some of his most glorious melodies. Mussetta's *Waltz Song* occurs in Act 2 when she seductively and successfully re-arouses Marcello's love for her.

Musetta

Quando me'n vo,
quando me'n vo soletta per la via,
la gente sosta e mira,
e la bellezza mia tutta ricerca in me,
da capo a piè.

ed assaporo allor la bramosia
sottil che da gli occhi traspira
e dai palesi vezzi intender sa
alleocculte beltà.

Così l'effluvio del desio
tutta m'aggira —
felice mi fa, felice mi fa!

E tu che sai, che memori e ti struggi,
da me tanto rifuggi?
So ben: le angoscie tue
non le vuoi dir, so ben, ma ti senti morir!

When I walk out
alone along the street,
all the people stop and stare,
and seek out all my beauty
from top to toe.

And then I relish the sly desire
which shines from eyes
and can infer hidden beauties
from outward charms.

Thus the breath of desire
whirls around me
and makes me happy!

And you who know, who remember and fret,
do you fly from me like that?
I know full well you'll not tell
your sufferings, I know, yet you feel ready to die!

Interval

FOUR LIEDER

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Meine Liebe ist grün (Op. 63, No. 5) — Felix Schumann

Wenn du nur zuweilen Lächelst (Op. 57, No. 2) — G. F. Daumer

Dein blaues Auge (Op. 59, No. 8) — Klaus Groth

Mein wundes Herz (Op. 59, No. 7) — Klaus Groth

Brahms's father was a double-bass player in the Hamburg Symphony Orchestra and saw to it that his son received the best musical education that was to be had locally. He became an accomplished pianist (occasionally practising his art in taverns and dancing saloons in order to earn his keep). From 1864 onwards he made his living solely as composer and conductor of his own works. Besides almost 200 songs for voice and piano accompaniment, Brahms published seven volumes of folk-song arrangements, six works for chorus and orchestra (including setting of Goethe, Schiller and Hölderlin), a *German Requiem*, four symphonies, two concert overtures, two piano concertos, three string quartets, and a great deal of other chamber music and music for solo piano.

Meine Liebe ist grün

Meine Liebe ist grün wie der Fliederbusch,
Und meine Lieb ist schön wie die Sonne;
Die glänzt wohl herab auf den Fliederbusch
Und füllt ihn mit Duft und mit Wonne.

Meine Liebe hat Schwingen der Nachtigall,
Und wiegt sich in blühendem Flieder,
Und jauchzet und singet vom Duft berauscht
Viel liebestrunzene Lieder.

My love is green as the lilac,
and my love is fair as the sun;
the sun gleams down on the lilac
and fills it with scent and joy.

My love has nightingale's wings
and sways in blossoming lilac,
exults and, scent-enraptured, sings
many a love-drunk song.

Wenn du nur zuweilen Lächelst

Wenn du nur zuweilen Lächelst,
Nur zuweilen Kühle fächelst
Dieser ungemessnen Glut,
In Geduld will ich mich fassen
Und dich alles treiben lassen,
Was der Liebe wehe tut.

If, only at times, you smile,
only at times fan coolness
to this unbounded fire,
in patience I'll be calm,
let you do all those things
that cause love pain.

Dein blaues Auge

Dein blaues Auge hält so still,
Ich blicke bis zum Grund.
Du fragst mich, was ich sehen will?
Ich sehe mich gesund.

Es brannte mich ein glühend Paar,
Noch schmerzt das Nachgefühl:
Das deine ist wie See so klar,
Und wie ein See so kühl.

Your eyes of blue remain so still,
into their depths I gaze.
You ask me what I wish to see?
I'm gazing to be healed.

I have been burnt by two ardent eyes,
the hurt of it pains still:
your eyes are limped as a lake,
and as a lake as cool.

Mein wundes Herz

Mein wundes Herz verlangt nach milder Ruh,
O hauche sie ihm ein!
Es fliegt dir weinend, bange schlagend zu,
O hülle du es ein!

Wie wenn ein Strahl durch schwere Wolken bricht,
So winkest du ihm zu:
O lächle fort mit deinem milden Licht!
Mein Pol, mein Stern bist du.

My wounded heart craves gentle peace,
oh, breathe peace into it!
To you it flies, weeping, fearful,
oh, enfold it!

Like a sunbeam piercing heavy cloud,
you beckon to it:
oh, let your gentle light smile on!
My pole, my star you are.

FOUR LIEDER

Richard Strauss (1864-1949)

Zueignung (Op. 10, No. 1) — Hermann Von Gilm
Das Rosenband (Op. 36, No. 1) — Friedrich Klopstock
Muttertändelei (Op. 43, No. 2) — Gottfried A. Bürger
Cäcilie (Op. 27, No. 2) — Julius Hart

Richard Strauss wrote more than two hundred songs. Most of them appeared in small volumes, twenty-six in all, each containing from three to eight songs, twelve of the volumes being devoted to the poems of a single author. The first complete edition of Strauss songs was published by Messrs. Boosey and Hawkes in 1964, the centenary year of the composer's birth. *Zueignung*, if not the first of Strauss' songs (he wrote a Christmas carol when he was six!) was the first to be published. Strauss was eighteen when he wrote it as one of a set of eight songs which he dedicated to the celebrated Wagnerian tenor Heinrich Vogl. Written in 1897, for Frau Marie Riemerschmid, *Das Rosenband* was one of the few songs orchestrated by Strauss. *Muttertändelei* was composed in 1899 as one of three settings of old German texts which were dedicated to the renowned contralto Ernestine Schumann-Heink. *Cäcilie* is from the volume presented as a wedding gift to his wife, Pauline, in 1894.

Zueignung

Ja, du weißt es, teure Seele,
dass ich fern von dir mich quäle,
liebe macht die Herzen krank,
habe Dank!

Einst hielt ich, Freiheit Zecher,
hoch den amethysten Becher
und du segnetest den Trank,
habe Dank!

Und beschwörst darin die Bösen,
bis ich, was ich nie gewesen,
heilig, heilig ans Herz dir sank,
habe Dank!

Dedication

Yes, you know it, dear soul,
that, far from you, I pine;
love makes hearts sick —
be thanked!

Once, revelling in freedom, I lifted
up the amethyst cup
and you blessed the drink —
be thanked!

And you banish the evil spirits,
till I was, what I had never been,
holy, and holy fell on your heart;
be thanked!

Das Rosenband

Im Frühlingssschatten fand ich sie,
da band ich sie mit Rosenbändern:
sie fühlt es nicht und schlummerte.

Ich sah sie an; mein Leben hing
mit diesem Blick an ihrem Leben:
ich fühlt' es wohl und wußt' es nicht.

Doch lispelt ich ihr sprachlos zu
und rauschte mit den Rosenbändern:
da wachte sie vom Schlummer auf.

Sie sah mich an; ihr Leben hing
mit diesem Blick an meinem Leben:
und um uns ward's Elysium.

Muttertändelei

Seht mir doch mein schönes Kind,
mit den goldnen Zottellöckchen,
blauen Augen, roten Bäckchen!
Leutchen, habt ihr auch so eins?
Leutchen, nein, ihr habt keins!

Seht mir doch mein süßes Kind,
fetter als ein fettes Schneckchen,
süßter als ein Zuckerweckchen!
Leutchen, habt ihr auch so eins?
Leutchen, nein, ihr habt keins!

Seht mir doch mein holdes Kind,
nicht zu mürrisch, nicht zu wählig!
Immer freundlich, immer fröhlich!
Leutchen, habt ihr auch so eins?
Leutchen, nein, ihr habt keins!

Seht mir doch mein frommes Kind!
Keine bitterbösen Sieben
würd ihr Mütterchen so lieben.
Leutchen, möchtet ihr so eins?
O, ihr krieget gewiss nicht meins!

Komm einmal ein Kaufmann her!
Hunderttausend blanken Taler,
alles Gold der Erde zahl er!
O, er krieget gewiss nicht meins!
Kauf er sich wo ander eins!

Cäcilie

Wenn du es wüsstest,
was träumen heisst von brennenden Küssen,
von Wandern und Ruhen mit der Geliebten,
Aug' in Auge und kosend und plaudernd —
Wenn du es wüsstest,
du neigest dein Herz.

Wenn du es wüsstest,
was bangen heisst in einsamen Nächten,
umschauert vom Sturm, da niemand tröstet
milden Mundes die kampfmüde Seele —
wenn du es wüsstest,
du kämest zu mir.

Wenn du es wüsstest,
was leben heisst, umhaucht von der Gottheit
weltschaffendem Atem, zu schweben empor
lichtgetragen, zu seligen Höh'n —
wenn du es wüsstest,
du lebstest mit mir!

The Rosy Ribbon

In spring shade I found her,
and with rosy ribbons bound her:
she felt it not and slumbered.

At her I gazed; my life hung,
in that gaze, on hers:
that I sensed and did not know.

But to her wordlessly I murmured
and stirred the rosy ribbons:
then from her slumber she awoke.

She gazed at me; her life hung,
in that gaze, on mine:
and about us was at once Elysium.

Tantalizing

Just look at my lovely child
with her thick golden ringlets,
her blue eyes, red cheeks!
Have you people got one like her?
No, you people, you have not!

Just look at my sweet child
plumper than a plump snail,
sweeter than a sugar loaf!
Have you people got one like her?
No, you people, you have not!

Just look at my darling child,
not too moody, not too picky!
Always friendly, always happy!
Have you people got one like her?
No, you people, you have not!

Just look at my good child!
If she were a spiteful shrew she
wouldn't love her mother so much.
Would you people like one like her?
O you certainly won't get mine!

Just let a merchant come along!
A hundred thousand shining guineas,
all the gold on earth, he might pay!
But he certainly won't get mine!
He can buy one somewhere else!

Cecilia

If you knew, only,
What it is to dream of fiery kisses,
Of roaming and resting with your beloved,
Lost in gazing, and fondling and prattling —
If you knew, only,
You would soften your heart.

If you knew, only,
What it is to fear, all lonely at night-time,
Mid threatening storms, with none to utter.
Soothing words to a strife-weary spirit —
If you knew, only,
You would hasten to me.

If you knew, only,
What it means to live, inspired by the almighty
World-creating Spirit, and soaring aloft,
Bathed in radiance, towards heavenly heights —
If you knew, only,
You would tarry with me.

RECITATIVE AND ARIA

Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901)

Ecco L'orrido Campo

Ma Dall'arido stelo divulsa — Un Ballo in Maschera

The original story of Scribe on which *Un Ballo in Maschera* is based and which had already been used by Auber in 1833 for his opera *Gustave III ou, le Bal Masqué*, concerned the assassination of King Gustavus III of Sweden, but the Austrian censorship forbade the stage presentation of a successful conspiracy against a reigning prince following an attempt on the life of Napoleon III by an Italian revolutionary, which took place while Verdi's opera was being rehearsed for its first performance at the San Carlo in Naples in 1858. The opera was withdrawn, and only passed the censorship when the scene was transferred to North America, with the Governor of Boston as the victim of a negro conspiracy. Riccardo, Count of Warwick and Governor of Boston, is loved by Amelia, the wife of his secretary Renato. At the beginning of Act 2 Amelia has come to a lonely spot to pick a herb to cure her love for Riccardo.

Amelia

Ecco l'orrido campo ove s'accoppia
al delitto la morte!

Ecco là le colonne.

La pianta è là,
verdeggia al piè.

S'innoltri!

Ah! mi si agghela il core!

Sino il rumor de' passi miei,
qui tutto m'empie
di raccapriccio e di terrore!

E se perir dovessi? Perire!

Ebben! quando la sorte mia,
il mio dover tal è, s'adempia, e sia!

Ma dall'arido stelo divulsa
come avrò di mia mano quell'erba,
e che dentro la mente convulsa
quell'eterea sembianza morrà:
che ti resta, perduto l'amor,
che ti resta, mio povero cor!
Oh! Chi piange, qual forza m'arresta,
m'attraversa la squalida via?
Sù, coraggio, e tu fatti di pietra,
non tradirmi, dal pianto ristà,
o finisci di battere e muor,
t'annienta, mio povero cor!

Mezzanotte! Ah! che veggio?

Una testa di sotterra

si leva, e sospira!

Ha negli occhi il baleno dell'ire,
e m'affisa, e m'affisa, e terribile sta!

Deh! me reggi, m'aita, o Signor,
miserere d'un povero cor.

O Signor, m'aita, o Signor.

Miserere, miserere,

ah! miserere di me, Signor!

Here is the dreadful field
where crime couples with death!

There are the posts!

The magic herb is there,
green at the base.

I must proceed!

Ah! my heart is frozen!

Even the noise of my own steps,
everything here,
fills me with horror and with fright!

What if I were to die? To die!

Ah then, if my fate, my duty, is such,
let it be fulfilled, so be it!

But when from the dry stem
I have picked the herb with my own hand,
and when inside my frantic mind
the cherished image will be dead,
what will be left to you, having lost love,
what will be left you, my wretched heart?
Oh! What tears, what force holds me back,
barring this dreary path?

Courage, now, and turn into stone,
do not betray me, withhold your tears,
or stop beating and die,
destroy yourself, my wretched heart!

Midnight! Ah! What do I see?

The head of a man

rises from beneath the ground and sighs!

Anger flashes in his eyes
and he stares at me, still and terrible!

Oh, support me, help me, O God,
have pity on a wretched heart.

O God, help me, O God.

Have pity, have pity,

ah! have pity on me, O God!

